



FirstProtect Policy
A Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth
First United Methodist Church - Dallas

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The members and staff of First United Methodist Church, Dallas (“FUMC”) are committed to the ministry to the children and youth participating in church activities and programs. We are further committed to the safety, welfare and protection of those children and youth, including providing an environment that is free of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. FirstProtect Policy – a Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth (“Policy”) attempts to address the preventable risk of any form of abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual, by any of the staff, teachers or volunteers of this church while on church property or while engaged in church activities or programs. It is also the policy of FUMC to protect, to the extent practicable, the rights of its staff, job applicants and volunteers from unfounded allegations of abuse.

This Policy is intended to further the aforesaid purpose and, in doing so:

- Increase awareness regarding abuse and/or neglect of children and/or youth;
- Institute procedures for screening and selecting persons who supervise and/or care for children and/or youth;
- Outline education and training requirements for paid staff, volunteers, children/youth and parents regarding procedures to reduce the risk of abuse of children and/or youth;
- Ensure that all allegations of abuse and/or neglect of children and/or youth are reported to the proper external and internal authorities;
- Provide thorough and compassionate support to victims of child and/or youth abuse; and,
- Protect all staff/volunteers who supervise and/or care for children and/or youth from unfounded accusations.

II. POLICY PROCEDURE

All FUMC activities and programs, regardless of location, involving children and/or youth are subject to the following procedures:

- A. Each person/applicant -paid or unpaid- applying to work or working at FUMC as an employee, contract worker, teacher or volunteer for child or youth activities, as well as other designated workers, will be required to complete an application/background information form, and undergo a criminal history/ background check.
- B. Eligible persons will undergo education offered by FUMC regarding interaction with children and youth.
- C. Except in emergency situations and/or when it is not reasonably feasible, a minimum of two (2) adults will be assigned to supervise or lead all activities involving children or youth age 18 years or younger. In those situations where it is not reasonably feasible to have two adults, a roaming staff member or approved volunteer may be used for additional coverage.
- D. Volunteers and paid staff will be advised to avoid being put in a situation where they are alone with a child/youth other than their own.

- E. Unannounced visits by a supervisor and/or other authorized individuals for informal checks will occur.
- F. FUMC will not tolerate or accept abuse of a child or youth and specifically any act or omission described in Attachment A (Prohibited Acts and Guidance Regarding Various Age Specific Conduct).
- G. Any violation of the Policy shall be reported as set forth herein.
- H. Upon accusation, the accused is entitled to prompt and fair disposition of the charges and to receive due process of law including the presumption of innocence.
- I. This Policy applies to all extension ministries of FUMC including, but not limited to, the Developmental Learning Center.
- J. This Policy may be extended to other persons and/or volunteers as the clergy and/or professional staff determine to be appropriate based on the individual's potential role and exposure to children and/or youth.
- K. This Policy does not replace any minimum standards, including but not limited to the Texas Childcare Minimum Standards, established by the State of Texas for child protection. If state or federal law or regulations require policies and procedures that are more stringent than those in this Policy, those state or federal laws or regulations will be followed.
- L. Any confidential information concerning staff, job applicants and volunteers obtained pursuant to this policy shall be marked confidential, kept in a central location under the control of the Business Administrator (staff and job applicants) and Assistant to Discipleship (volunteers), and disclosed only to staff and lay officers of FUMC having a "need to know" such information.
- M. FUMC will have a permanent committee to enable FUMC to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse (the Children's/Youth Safety Committee).

III. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

A. Children's/Youth Safety Committee

FUMC will appoint and maintain a Children's/Youth Safety Committee (the "Committee"), which will meet at least twice annually and additionally as needed. At least annually, the Committee will review this Policy and report its review to the Board of Trustees.

The Committee will be comprised of at least seven persons and will endeavor to include one staff-person, one FUMC member who is a mental health professional, one FUMC member who is designated to interface with other constituents, two FUMC members who are parents, one involved FUMC member, and one FUMC member who is an attorney. The Committee will include at least one member of the Board of Trustees and one member of the Staff Parish Relations Committee. The Committee members will serve a two-year term in rotating classes of three persons each. All members of the Committee will be appointed by the Senior Minister and the Executive Minister. The Committee will elect the chair. All members of the Committee shall be fair and impartial.

The general role of the Committee is to review existing FUMC policies and procedures related to Children's/Youth safety issues; monitor Children's/Youth Ministries for ongoing compliance with policies; make recommendations to the Board of Trustees regarding safety issues; and, impartially review any alleged incidents and recommend appropriate actions, if any. Under no circumstances should the Committee attempt to replace, delay or interfere with the investigation of an incident by any legal authority.

Committee members shall maintain the confidentiality of the matters brought before the Committee except insofar as those matter(s) are subject to investigation by any legal authority.

B. Eligibility/Registration of Volunteers and Staff

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to directly care for and/or supervise children and/or youth, a person should have been a member or active constituent of FUMC for a period of at least six months. Alternatively, the person shall provide a written recommendation from the lead pastor at the church most recently affiliated with or provide a written recommendation from two current members (non-family) of FUMC who have been members for at least one year.

- a. This requirement does not apply to staff.
- b. An intern may be excepted from this requirement if the senior minister determines and confirms in writing that this requirement may be waived for the specific intern.
- c. Parents, Grandparents, and/or Legal Guardians who have not met this requirement may volunteer as a guest if clergy and/or professional staff approve of their volunteering, and so long as two (2) or more adult paid staff or registered volunteers are on site and in charge. All guest volunteers are subject to all other requirements in this Policy, specifically including all other screening and training requirements.

2. Background Check

Further, to be eligible to directly care for and/or supervise children and/or youth, volunteers shall be subject to mandatory reference and criminal background checks. Children's or Youth Ministry, Youth staff, or other clergy and/or professional staff, or their trained designee(s) will meet with and coordinate with the Assistant to Discipleship to initiate the background/application process with respect to their respective volunteers. Staff, teachers of children and youth under 18 years of age, volunteers for child and youth activities or programs of FUMC, and other designated volunteers will be required to complete a background information form providing personal and confidential information necessary to perform security background checks on each individual, as well as additional information such as area of child/youth work in which applicant is interested; training or education in child/youth-related work; identification of church membership for the last five (5) years (for volunteers); identification of child/youth related work over the past five (5) years, including relevant churches/organizations; and references. In addition to the Application, the applicant shall read and sign and initial the Volunteer Statements and Agreed Code of Conduct, Acknowledgement of FirstProtect Policy, a Protection Policy for Children and Youth, and A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act Relating to Criminal Background Screening. A copy of the current application and the other documents referenced in the previous sentence are attached as Attachment B.

Security background checks for persons age 18 and older will be administered by or under the direction of the Business Administrator (staff)/ Assistant to Discipleship (volunteers) with the assistance of the appropriate agency performing the checks. Without the written permission of the staff member or the volunteer whose background information is being obtained, except as may be required by law, all personal information disclosed, the information contained on the background information form, the results of the background check, and/or the refusal of any person to participate in a program or activity as a result of such disclosure requirements will be kept confidential.

The Business Administrator (staff)/ Assistant to Discipleship (volunteers) will maintain a locked storage cabinet in the church for all background information forms and the results of all background checks. The results of the security background checks will be destroyed periodically if required by the guidelines mandated by the appropriate local agency.

3. Disqualification

Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of the security background check, the following items will automatically disqualify an applicant from participating in an activity involving children under 18 years of age:

- a. Any indictment alleging the offense of or any conviction for: violent offenses such as murder; aggravated assault; sexual abuse; sexual assault (rape); aggravated sexual assault; domestic violence; injury to a child, whether physical, emotional, sexual or neglectful; incest; indecency with a child; inducing sexual contact or sexual performance of a child; possession or promotion of child pornography; the sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor; employment harmful to children; or abandonment or endangerment of a child.
- b. Drug related offenses within the five (5) years immediately prior to application; and/or DUI or DWI history within the five (5) years immediately prior to application.
- c. Persons with a DUI or DWI conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to the application may volunteer if approved in writing by clergy and/or professional staff, but in no event, shall they serve as a driver.
- d. All other convictions or charges for any crimes not listed above will be reviewed by the Committee in conjunction with the Senior and/or Executive Pastor.

Special circumstances (such as acquittals, discharges, exonerations, pardons, etc.) may be considered as an exception to this requirement, so long as the Committee in conjunction with the Senior and/or Executive Pastor and the District Superintendent or appropriate Conference Staff are notified before making any decisions.

If the applicant disputes information that appears in his or her criminal history transcript, he or she may appeal through the agency performing the background checks.

A staff member or volunteer may be temporarily accepted while their background check is in process provided an existing staff member approves of their participation and confirms that two (2) other staff and/or registered volunteers are on site and in charge.

Because background checks are not available for persons under the age of 18, youth assistants should be screened using other screening procedures consistent with this Policy.

4. Five-Year Rule

Individuals directly supervising and/or caring for children and/or youth should be at least 5 years older than any child and/or youth they are supervising. The Five-Year rule does not apply to clergy and professional staff. Nor does it apply to interns so long as they are under the direct and immediate supervision of clergy and/or professional staff. Additionally, the rule does not apply to youth assistants as long as:

- a. They are directly and immediately supervised by, and are in sight and hearing range at all times of, at least two (2) adults who meet the requirements of this Policy; and
- b. They are not placed in charge of, and/or left alone with, any children and/or youth.

5. Updated Information

All staff members and volunteers involved in activities with children and youth and other designated volunteers shall submit an updated background information form every year disclosing any changes in applicant/residence information and criminal history, and certifying that he/she has read and understands FUMC's policy and guidelines on Child Protection, and has not violated same and agrees to abide by the Policy in the future. Such form is attached with Attachment B.

6. Clergy/Professional Discretion

Clergy and/or professional staff retain the discretion to decline the request of any person seeking to care for and/or supervise children and/or youth, regardless of whether the person has satisfied all requirements contained herein.

C. Training/Education

FUMC requires that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors of "grooming" a child/youth for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's/youth's trust (and the trust of the child's/youth's parent or guardian), manipulate the child/youth into sexual activity and keep the child/youth from disclosing the abuse. To educate and equip staff members and volunteers with information regarding recognition of abuser characteristics, FUMC requires all staff members and volunteers to whom this policy applies to complete approved abuse awareness training every two years. FUMC presently utilizes the Ministry-Safe education program.

Staff and volunteers are required to complete and submit proof of passing the Ministry-Safe education program, review this policy and the guidance and sign an acknowledgement indicating that he/she has read and understood the materials and will comply with same.

D. Reporting Violation of Policy

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children and youth, FUMC staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of this Policy, including if a child or youth reports abusive or neglectful conduct while engaged in a church-sponsored activity involving staff, teachers, or volunteers of FUMC, or parents/other family or friends, regardless of where the conduct occurred (FUMC, the child's home or other location). All questions or concerns related to inappropriate and/or suspicious behavior, including those situations in which the observer is uncertain as to whether the conduct is a violation of this Policy, should be directed to a supervisor, staff member, or a member of the Committee.

Reports should be made as follows:

For life-threatening or emergency situations, including threats of imminent danger, call 911 or local police immediately and, as soon as possible afterward, contact the FUMC staff member in charge of the area or event and/or other staff member and Child Protective Services (CPS), as appropriate. The staff member will notify the Senior or Executive Pastor.

Current legal authority telephone numbers are:

- 911
- (214) 670-6178 -- City of Dallas Police
- (800) 252-5400 -- CPS Child Abuse Hotline or <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

For other situations involving questionable circumstances, observations, acts, omissions or situations that may be a violation of this Policy and/or are otherwise concerning, contact the FUMC staff member in charge of the applicable area or event or other staff as soon as possible. The staff member is to notify the Senior or Executive Pastor or the Committee Chair, with all matters to then be reported to the Committee. The Committee will promptly investigate and determine further action. If it is determined that further reporting is required, the person who witnessed or received the report of abuse or suspected abuse, together with the FUMC staff member to whom it was reported should then report the circumstances to the CPS Child Abuse Hotline at the number or URL shown above within 48 hours of first learning of/suspecting the abuse. An Incident Report (Attachment C) must also be completed as described in the Documentation section of this Policy.

Additional Guidance

Procedures for handling abuse situations/incidents witnessed by or reported to you are listed below. These guidelines should be followed to ensure the security of the child or youth involved and to protect against physical, emotional or psychological injury to all persons involved.

1. Personally secure the safety of the child, children, or youth.
2. Report the incident immediately as directed above.
3. Do not leave the child, children or youth alone to report the incident.
4. Do not personally confront the alleged or accused violator of the Policy.
5. Allow the designated person (program staff, Executive Pastor or Senior Pastor) to provide you with guidance for reporting the incident.
6. FUMC will designate a representative who will be solely responsible for all communications on behalf of the church.
7. Reports may be made anonymously.

Documentation

In all cases, an Incident Report must be completed by the witness/reporter and the applicable FUMC staff member to whom the report was made, and submitted to the Business Administrator as soon as possible. This applies to all incidents, including anonymously-reported cases. Incident Reports will be maintained confidentially in a locked file cabinet. The report should include specific words first spoken by the child or youth and the conduct and demeanor observed concerning the incident.

E. Consequences of Violation

Any person accused of a Prohibited Act (Attachment A), whether a staff member or volunteer, will immediately be suspended from participation in all child and youth activities and child and youth programs at FUMC. Such suspension shall continue during any investigation by the church, appropriate law enforcement agency and/or TDFPS.

Any person found to have committed a Prohibited Act shall be prohibited from future participation in all child and youth activities and programs of FUMC. If the person is a staff member, such conduct may also result in termination of employment.

Failure to report a Prohibited Act in a timely manner shall be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of employment of a staff member and suspension and/or dismissal of volunteers from participation in all child and youth activities and child and youth programs of FUMC. Such person may also be held liable under the laws of the State of Texas.

F. Response

Upon receiving a report or learning of an alleged or suspected abuse situation, staff and/or the Committee will immediately initiate the following institutional response as applicable:

1. If it has not already been done, remove and suspend the accused from responsibilities involving children/youth pending investigation.
2. Inform the parents or guardian of the alleged victim and respond to their questions and concerns.
3. Notify appropriate governmental authorities.
4. Notify the director of the affected ministry area, the church's insurance carriers and legal counsel.

Although attempts should be made to take these actions in the order indicated, there should be no delay in completing all of the steps as soon as possible after receiving a report.

The plan of action for the Committee in conjunction with staff will include as applicable:

1. Responding appropriately to the needs of the accused;
2. Discussion with legal counsel and insurance carriers(s) and assisting with any investigation;
3. Cooperation with governmental authorities in any investigation;
4. Providing any appropriate assistance to the alleged victim and his/her family including obtaining counseling or referral to a mental health professional;
5. Designating a spokesperson for FUMC to respond to any media or other public inquiries;
6. Reminding staff and volunteers of the need for confidentiality at all times;
7. Considering and responding appropriately to the concerns of other parents.

The rights of all parties shall be respected; confidentiality, consistent with legal requirements, shall be carefully maintained.

IV. DOCUMENT RETENTION

Documents called for under this policy, including background forms, security checks, incident reports and covenants, shall be maintained in confidence by the Business Administrator and or Assistant to Discipleship (respectively, as set forth herein) in a locked file cabinet for a period of 25 years, unless modified by law or policy.

V. DEFINITIONS

A. Persons who supervise and/or care for children and/or youth:

1. Adult: any person age eighteen or older.
2. Clergy: a sub-set of paid staff who are licensed, commissioned or ordained ministers serving either by Episcopal appointment or who are retired and employed by the local church.
3. Intern: any adult paid staff or volunteer whose work at FUMC is temporary and is performed in connection with their education and/or career aspirations. The senior minister shall resolve any question as to whether or not a person is an intern.
4. Professional Staff: a sub-set of paid staff who fill supervisory and/or specialized positions and who are not clergy. This category includes, but is not limited to, the Director of Children's Ministries, the Director of Youth Ministries, the Director and Assistant Director of Music and Arts, the Nursery Coordinator, and the Director of the Developmental Learning Center (so long as the persons filling these roles are not clergy). The senior minister shall resolve any question as to whether or not a person is professional staff.
5. Staff: any adult who receives remuneration from FUMC.
6. Volunteer: any adult who supervises and/or cares for children and/or youth other than their own who does not receive remuneration from FUMC.
7. Youth Assistant: any person under the age of 18 who supervises and/or cares for children and/or youth, regardless of whether they are remunerated by FUMC.

B. Persons who are supervised and/or cared for:

1. Child: any person who is one day old through the beginning of seventh grade. If the person is unable to be categorized by grade level, a child is anyone who has not yet reached his or her thirteenth birthday.
2. Youth: any person who is beginning seventh grade through his or her graduation from high school. A person who has not yet graduated from high school but intends to do so is still considered a youth even if they have reached the age of eighteen. If the person is unable to be categorized by grade level, a youth is anyone age thirteen until his or her eighteenth birthday.

Clergy and/or professional staff have the discretion to classify a particular person as a child or youth depending on the particular circumstances. In no circumstance may any person under the age of eighteen (18) be classified as anything other than a child or youth.

C. Abuse and Neglect:

As used in this Policy, "abuse" and "neglect" include and mean:

1. Emotional Abuse: Exposing children and/or youth to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the recipient that she or he is worthless, bad, unloved and/or undeserving of love and care. Emotional abuse may include locking a victim in a closet or other confining space, incessantly telling an individual that s/he is bad or forcing an individual to abuse alcohol or illegal drugs (which may also be physical abuse).

2. Neglect: Endangering a child's and/or youth's health, welfare, and/or safety through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, water and/or medical care. Neglect may include withholding interaction to harm the individual's sense of self-esteem and self-worth.
3. Physical Abuse: Any act or omission (failure to act) that endangers a person's physical or mental health; In the case of children and/or youth, this definition includes any intentional physical injury caused by someone (or multiple people) with responsibility for the victim's welfare. Physical abuse may result from punishment that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition. Physical abuse may result from purposeful acts that pose serious danger to the physical health of a child or youth.
4. Ritual Abuse: Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violence is inflicted on a child and/or youth, intentionally and in a stylized way, by someone (or multiple people) with responsibility for the victim's welfare. In ritual abuse, the perpetrator typically appeals to some higher authority or power to justify his or her abuse.

Examples of ritual abuse may include but are not limited to: cruel treatment of animals or repetitious threats of sexual or physical violence to the child or youth victim or to people related to the victim. This includes hazing.

5. Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation or use of a child and/or youth for the satisfaction of sexual desires. This includes, but is not limited to: 1) incest, 2) rape, 3) prostitution, 4) romantic involvement with any participant, 5) any sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct with, or fondling of an individual enrolled as a child or youth in sponsored activities of this church, 6) sexualized behavior that communicates sexual interest and/or content.

Examples include but are not limited to: displaying sexually suggestive visual materials, photography or videotaping done for the satisfaction of sexual desires, making sexual comments or innuendo about one's own or another person's body, inappropriately touching another person's body, hair or clothing, inappropriately touching or rubbing oneself in the presence of another person, kissing, and sexual intercourse.

6. Verbal Abuse: Any verbal act that humiliates degrades or threatens any child and/or youth.

This policy, as amended, was adopted by the FUMC Board of Trustees on January _____, 2018

Signature of Presiding Member of Board of Trustees

Attachment A

FirstProtect Policy - Prohibited Acts and Guidance Regarding Various Age Specific Conduct

Prohibited Acts:

The following acts are prohibited by this Policy and will not be tolerated or accepted during any FUMC activity or program. Any observations or personal knowledge of such violations must immediately be reported to the appropriate legal authorities, or the appropriate program staff after the safety of the child, children, or youth involved has been assured.

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a child or youth.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any adult and a child or youth.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between a youth and a child.
- Physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a child or youth.
- Physical neglect of a child, children or youth, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of FUMC.
- Causing mental or emotional injury to a child, children or youth.
- Possessing obscene or pornographic materials at any function of FUMC with the exception of approved sex education materials.
- Possessing or being under the influence of any illegal drugs.
- Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a child or youth function at FUMC.

Guidance Regarding Various Age Specific Conduct:

Release Requirements for children and youth:

- Children from birth through the beginning of third grade may be released only to a properly identified and pre-authorized adult.
- Children in their third-grade year may only be released to a properly identified and pre-authorized adult, although parents and/or legal guardians may authorize in writing that their third grade-aged children be released without being accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
- Children and youth from fourth through twelfth grade will be released from Sunday school and other FUMC events on their own accord, unless written instructions to the contrary are received from a parent/guardian. All parent(s) and guardian(s) are encouraged to drop off and pick up their child/children from church sponsored events. For non-Sunday school events, two MinistrySafe adults will stay until all children or youth have departed.
- Parents and/or legal guardians are encouraged to participate in all programs and are allowed access to their children and/or youth at all times, subject to any legal custodial restrictions on file in the church office.
- FUMC will seek to inform all parents and/or legal guardians of these release policies.

Overnight Events

- The standard two-person rule requiring at least two adults to be present whenever a child and/or youth is present applies, except in emergency situations and in the event that it is not reasonably feasible.
- If sleeping in a bunk-room or other facility with communal housing, there should be at least two adults present in every room, cabin, etc.

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- If sleeping in a hotel, dormitory, or other facility with individual rooms that have an interior connection (i.e., adjoining hotel rooms), the adjoining rooms should be occupied by children, youth or adults of the same gender.
- If sleeping arrangements include sleeping bags or blankets, a “one person to one bag or blanket” rule should be observed.
- If it is necessary for adults to share a room with children and/or youth, adults should sleep in a separate bed, and one adult should never be alone with a child and/or youth.
- Clergy and/or professional staff should create a room-monitoring system prior to the beginning of the trip.
- Children and/or youth who desire to participate in a FUMC event or activity may be required to enter into a covenant between FUMC, the participant, and the participant’s parent(s) and/or legal guardian.
- If clergy and/or professional staff decide that a covenant is proper for a particular activity or event and require participants to enter into a covenant, no children and/or youth may participate in the event without a covenant signed by the participant and the participant’s parent(s) and/or legal guardian.

**Attachment B
Includes:**

- **FUMC Safety Application Form for Volunteers and Employees**
- **Volunteer Statements and Agreed Code of Conduct**
- **Acknowledgement of FirstProtect Policy, a Protection Policy for Children and Youth**
- **A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act Relating to Criminal Background Screening**
- **Updated Background Information Form**

(The forms follow this page)

First United Methodist Church - Dallas Safety Application Form for Volunteers and Employees

CONFIDENTIAL

This application should be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or employment) involving the supervision of minor children or vulnerable adults, such as elderly or impaired persons. This is not an employment application. The purpose of this form is to assist in the creation of a safe environment for children and students who participate in the programs of First United Methodist Church - Dallas or use First United Methodist Church - Dallas facilities.

Legal Name: _____

Other names previously used: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

Driver's License # _____ State: _____

Sex: _____ M _____ F Date of Birth: _____

Marital Status: _____ (single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, etc.)

Are you a member or regular attender of this church? _____

If so, for how long? _____

How long have you lived at your current address? _____

Previous address: _____

List all other cities and states where you have lived as an adult:

Please list the name, address, city and state of other churches you have attended regularly during the past 10 years: _____

Please list all previous church work involving children, students or vulnerable populations (impaired, adults, special needs individuals etc.). (List each church's name and address, type of work carried out, dates, and a contact person familiar with your work there. Use back of this page for more space, if necessary.)

Please list all previous non-church work involving children, students or vulnerable populations. (List each organization's name and address, type of work carried out, dates and a contact person familiar with your work there.)

List any talents, vocations, preparation, training or other experiences which have equipped you to work with children, students or vulnerable adults:

Please provide at least one professional reference, one personal reference, and one family member. References must include one non-family member and one member of the opposite sex. Please contact these references and inform them an authorized First United Methodist Church-Dallas staff person will be contacting them.

Professional reference(s):

Personal reference(s):

Family Member reference(s):

Because our church cares for our members and our children, and desires to protect them, please answer the following questions. We understand that the answers to these questions may be private and deeply personal, and we will protect your privacy.

Why do you want to work with children or students at First United Methodist Church-Dallas?

Do you have a preference concerning the age group or sex of children or students with whom you would like to work? Why?

What is your philosophy concerning re-direction or discipline of children?

When you are unhappy, angry or emotional about a person or circumstance, what do you do?

Have you experienced any significant physical or emotional stresses within the past year, such as the loss of a parent, spouse, or child, extreme ill health, or any emotional or physical crisis? If so, please briefly explain. (Use back of page if necessary.)

Have you ever physically or sexually abused a child? _____

Has someone ever accused you of abusing a child? _____

RELEASE

I authorize First United Methodist Church-Dallas to contact all individuals, organizations and references listed on this Safety Application Form in order to verify the information I have provided to the church. I agree to release from liability any person or organization that provides information concerning me, including those persons I have listed as references, as well as contact persons from my previous church and non-church work, listed on this application. I specifically authorize the church to undertake a criminal background check concerning my past.

I understand and agree that any information received from the background check and application verification will not be disclosed to me, and I hereby waive any right I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me on this form.

By signing this form, I certify and affirm that the information I have given on this form is true, complete and correct in all respects.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____

Volunteer Statements and Agreed Code of Conduct

Please initial each of the following statements:

- _____ I declare that all statements contained in my Safety Application Form are true. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission is cause for dismissal from any ministry involvement.
- _____ I understand that my references and contacts from prior church or non-church work with children, student, or disabled adults will be contacted and that an appropriate criminal background check will be conducted. I authorize investigations of all statements contained in this application. I specifically authorize the church to undertake a criminal background check of my past.
- _____ I understand that I must be interviewed and recommended by a member of the Church Screening and Selection Committee before I begin service as a volunteer in First United Methodist Church-Dallas ministries.
- _____ I understand that I can withdraw from the application process at any time.
- _____ I understand that First United Methodist Church-Dallas has a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE FOR ABUSE and takes all allegations of abuse seriously. I further understand that First United Methodist Church-Dallas cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Abuse of any kind is grounds for immediate dismissal from my volunteer position and possible criminal charges.
- _____ I declare that I am not a pedophile or child molester. I have not perpetrated physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect against a child, student or disabled adult, and I have never been accused of these acts.
- _____ I understand and agree that false statements regarding past conduct and/or present situations may be grounds for denial of this application to provide volunteer services, and that refusal to inform First United Methodist Church-Dallas of the contents of a sealed criminal record will result in the automatic denial of the application.
- _____ If accepted as a volunteer, I agree to read and abide by all Policies and Procedures provided to me by First United Methodist Church-Dallas.
- _____ I understand that it is important to maintain appropriate relational boundaries with children and youth, including the use of Social Media.
- _____ I will not engage in, encourage or condone cyberbullying.
- _____ I will not engage in the creation, viewing or distribution of pornography with children or youth.
- _____ I understand that Social Media, even though it offers convenient and private channels, is not an appropriate medium for counseling - especially with children and youth.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____



**Acknowledgement of FirstProtect Policy,
a Protection Policy for Children and Youth**

I have read and understand the FirstProtect Policy, a policy for the protection of children and youth. I also understand the reporting structure in the Policy and agree to follow the Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act Relating to Criminal Background Screening

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history records). Here is a summary of your major rights under the FCRA. For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.ftc.gov/credit or write to: Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20580.

- You must be told if information in your file has been used against you. Anyone who uses a credit report or another type of consumer report to deny your application for credit, insurance, or employment- or to take another adverse action against you - must tell you, and must give you the name, address, and phone number of the agency that provided the information.
- You have the right to know what is in your file. You may request and obtain all the information about you in the files of a consumer reporting agency (your "file disclosure"). You will be required to provide proper identification, which may include your Social Security number. In many cases, the disclosure will be free. You are entitled to a free file disclosure if:
 - A person has taken adverse action against you because of information in your credit report;
 - You are the victim of identity theft and place a fraud alert in your file;
 - Your file contains inaccurate information as a result of fraud;
 - You are on public assistance;
 - You are unemployed but expect to apply for employment within 60 days.

In addition, by September 2005 all consumers will be entitled to one free disclosure every 12 months upon request from each nationwide credit bureau and from nationwide specialty consumer reporting agencies. See www.ftc.gov/credit for additional information.

- You have the right to ask for a credit score. Credit scores are numerical summaries of your credit-worthiness based on information from credit bureaus. You may request a credit score from consumer reporting agencies that create scores or distribute scores used in residential real property loans, but you will have to pay for it. In some mortgage transactions, you will receive credit score information for free from the mortgage lender.
- You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information. If you identify information in your file that is incomplete or inaccurate, and report it to the consumer reporting agency, the agency must investigate unless your dispute is frivolous. See www.ftc.gov/credit for an explanation of dispute procedures.
- Consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information. Inaccurate, incomplete or unverifiable information must be removed or corrected, usually within 30 days. However, a consumer reporting agency may continue to report information it has verified as accurate.
- Consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information. In most cases, a consumer reporting agency may not report negative information that is more than seven years old, or bankruptcies that are more than 10 years old.
- Access to your file is limited. A consumer reporting agency may provide information about you only to people with a valid need - usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. The FCRA specifies those with a valid need for access.
- You must give your consent for reports to be provided to employers. A consumer reporting agency may not give out information about you to your employer, or a potential employer, without your written consent given to the employer. Written consent generally is not required in the trucking industry. For more information, go to www.ftc.gov/credit.
- You may limit "prescreened" offers of credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report. Unsolicited "prescreened" offers for credit and insurance must include a toll-free phone number you can call if you choose to remove your name and address from the lists these offers are based on. You may opt-out with the nationwide credit bureaus at 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688).
- You may seek damages from violators. If a consumer reporting agency, or in some cases, a user of consumer reports or a furnisher of information to a consumer reporting agency violates the FCRA, you may be able to sue in state or federal court.
- Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have additional rights. For more information, visit www.ftc.gov/credit.

States may enforce the FCRA, and many states have their own consumer reporting laws. In some cases, you may have more rights under state law. For more information, contact your state or local consumer protection agency or your state Attorney General.

Initials: _____



Updated Background Information Form

I specifically authorize FUMC to undertake an updated criminal background check. I understand and agree that any information received from the background check will not be disclosed to me, and I hereby waive any right I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me on this form.

By signing this form, I certify and affirm that I have read and understand the FirstProtect Policy, a policy for the protection of children and youth. I also certify and affirm that I have not violated the Policy and agree to continue to abide by the Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

For Office Use Only:

I have reviewed this application and have noted any missing information.

_____ Application

_____ Release

_____ Volunteer Statements and Agreed Code of Conduct

_____ Acknowledgement Form for FirstProtect Policy

_____ Summary of Rights under Fair Credit Act

_____ Updated Background Information Form

Screening Committee Member Signature

Printed Name

Date

Attachment C

FUMC FirstProtect Incident Report

(The form follows this page)

First United Methodist Church Dallas

Incident Report

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent's name(s): _____ Home Phone: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ Work/Cell Phone: _____

Date, location, and time problem was identified:

Date of incident: _____

Description of the incident/issue. Include words spoken, conduct observed and/or reported: (continue on reverse if needed)

FUMC staff notified-names, dates and times:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____